

# Inside the Jewish Bakery: Cookies

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Hamantashen.  
(Courtesy of Sarah Riechers-Krippner)

## Hamentashen

*Having fasted the whole day according to custom, the good householders of Kasrilevka finally saw the sun sinking and hastened to the synagogue to celebrate the Purim services, to chant the Book of Esther and take revenge on Haman. And having hurried through the final prayers standing on one foot, the hungry Kasrilevites rushed out in a body the quicker to come home and the quicker to break the fast, each one under his own grapevine and his own fig tree, with a fresh, warm hamantash full of poppy seed.*

—SHOLOM ALEICHEM, “TWO DEAD MEN”

*Makes about three dozen small and a dozen and a half large cookies*

### INGREDIENTS

- 1 recipe Short cookie dough
- 1 recipe Poppy seed, prune, apricot or fruit filling
- ½ cup/6 oz./340 g. Apricot jam, melted (optional)

1. Preheat your oven to 350° F./175° C. Remove the dough from the refrigerator and break it by hand or by machine. Turn it onto a lightly floured work surface and roll the dough into a log about 1 in./2.5 cm. in diameter. Use a sharp knife to cut the dough into 10 oz./30 g. pieces. On a work surface lightly dusted with powdered sugar, flatten each into a circle about 2 in./5 cm. in diameter. Note: For larger hamantashen, scale the dough to 2 oz./55 g. and make the circles about 3 to 4 in./7.5 to 10 cm. in diameter.
2. Put approximately 1 tsp./15 ml. of filling into the center of each circle and fold the sides up into a triangular shape around the filling—like Haman’s three-cornered hat—pinching the corners firmly to hold the shape. Arrange on parchment-lined sheet pans 1 in./2.5 cm apart.
3. Bake until the hamantashen turn light brown, turning the pan halfway through for even baking, 15 to 20 minutes. Remove to a rack and let cool. If desired, glaze the filling with melted apricot jam.



Use any of the short doughs to make rugelach.

## Rugelach

Joan Nathan has observed that no other Jewish sweet has gone more mainstream than rugelach, crescent-shaped cookies whose name comes from the Yiddish *rugel* (royal), and is also called *kipfel*, cheese *beygelach*, and cream cheese horns of plenty. Grandma Becky, who came from just outside of Warsaw, and Grandma Annie, who came from the Ukraine, near Kiev, both used sour cream dough and filled them with cinnamon sugar, raisins and chopped nuts. It was here in America that our mothers—and the Yiddish bakers—learned

to use cream cheese dough, which may have been developed by the makers of Philadelphia Cream Cheese, and the full panoply of bakery fillings.

*Makes about two dozen cookies*

## INGREDIENTS

1 recipe Short cookie dough

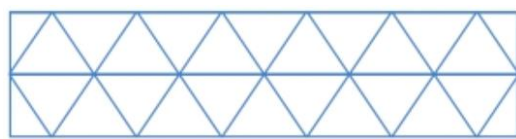
¼ cup/2 oz./55 g. Unsalted butter, melted

1 recipe Cinnamon sugar, Almond, hazelnut or chocolate filling, or 1 cup/12 oz./340 g. seedless raspberry or apricot jam (1 cup cake crumbs, if using jam)

½ cup/4 oz./115 g. Chopped nuts (optional)

Egg wash (1 large egg + 1 tsp./15 ml. of water)

1. Preheat your oven to 350° F./175° C. Remove the dough from the refrigerator and break it by hand or by machine. Place it on a lightly floured work surface and roll it into an 18 x 8 in./45 x 20 cm. rectangle, 1/8 to ¼ in. thick. Dust with flour as necessary to prevent sticking.
2. Brush the dough with half of the melted butter and spread the filling evenly. If using cinnamon sugar, sprinkle with chopped nuts and/or raisins, if desired. Use the rolling pin to press the filling gently into the dough. If using jam, combine it with the cake crumbs before spreading.
3. Using a sharp knife or a pizza wheel, divide the dough lengthwise into two strips about 4 in./10 cm. wide and then make a series of diagonal cuts to form two rows of triangles about 3 in./7.5 cm. wide at the base.



4. Starting at the short end, roll each triangle jelly-roll style so that you have a tapered cookie with the point in the middle. Place them point side down on parchment-lined sheet pans about 1 in./2.5 cm apart.
5. Wash with egg, if desired, and bake for 15 to 20 minutes, until rugelach are light brown. Arrange on a rack, brush with the remaining melted butter and let cool.